

In re Appln. of Forney et al.
Application No. 09/955,473

REMARKS

The Office Action dated October 6, 2004, and the references cited therein have been considered. Claims 1-20 are presently pending. No claims currently stand allowed. In view of the amendments above and remarks set forth herein below, the pending claims 1-20 are patentable over the prior art presently known to Applicants. In response to the objection, the ABSTRACT is now revised to be a single paragraph less than 150 words. Accordingly, Applicants request favorable reconsideration of the previous rejection of the now pending claims. Please charge any fee deficiencies to Deposit Account No. 12-1216.

Summary of the Prior Art-Based Claim Rejections

The following identifies the authority and prior art applied to the identified claims for each rejection of the claims set forth in the Office Action dated October 6, 2004.

1. **Section 4:** Claims 1-5 and 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Anuff et al. U.S. Pat. No. 6,327,628 (the Anuff '628 patent) in view of Chen et al. U.S. Pat. No. 5,768,133 (the Chen '133 patent).

2. **Section 5:** Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Anuff et al. U.S. Pat. No. 6,327,628 (the Anuff '628 patent) in view of Chen et al. U.S. Pat. No. 5,768,133 (the Chen '133 patent) and Official Notice taken that rendering a configuration template prompting a user for information is notoriously well known in the art, examples of which are: web forms and templates made of fields and drop-down selection menus.

Applicants traverse the grounds for each and every rejection for at least the reasons set forth herein below. Applicants address the specific rejections in the order they arise in sections 4 and 5 of the Office Action.

Applicants traverse the rejection of **claim 1** as being obvious over the Anuff '628 patent in view of the Chen '133 patent for at least the reason that the Anuff '628 patent neither discloses nor suggests the functionality of the recited portal configuration utility. Claim 1, amended to make clear the information sources' relationship to the portal server, is directed to a customer-configurable plant process observation portal server including a portal

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configuration utility that facilitates adding a new plant information source to an extensible set of plant information sources *accessed via the portal server*.

Typical portal sites/servers provide virtually the same resources to a very large potential audience having varying needs and authority. Applicants readily acknowledged in the Background section at paragraph 7 of the published application that, at the time the application was filed on September 17, 2001, it was known by those skilled in the art to access process control information/resources via temporary sessions established via a wide area network link. One particular example being data access provided via an Internet/intranet portal server. A shortcoming of the prior known systems was the difficulty in adding new sources of information accessed via the portal server. This shortcoming, relating to the sources of information *accessed by the portal server via a network (as opposed to the content provided to users of a portal site supported by the server)*, is not addressed by the cited Anuff '628 patent.

As indicated by the Title of the Anuff '628 patent, functionality is provided, in Anuff, that enables customization of end-users' browser *views* of information provided by a portal server. The Anuff '628 patent discloses, at cols. 6-8, configuration functionality that enables users to specify a subset from a set of available modules that provide data acquired by a portal server. Customizing views affects the front-end user interface side of the portal server. However, such user-specific customization does not change the back-end of the portal server, namely, the set of information sources from which the portal server acquires data that populates the customized views. The Anuff '628 patent is silent with regard to configuring the set of back-end information sources that supply the information provided to users via the customizable front-end client browser interfaces supported by the portal server. Therefore, the Anuff '628 patent neither discloses nor suggests the now clarified/recited portal configuration utility/interface, in claim 1, that enables a customer to add a new information source to the set of information sources accessed via the portal server.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 2, 3 and 4 for at least the reasons set forth herein above with regard to claim 1.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 5. In addition to the reasons set forth herein above, Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 5 for at least the additional reason the Anuff '628 patent neither discloses or even remotely suggests the recited extensible set of data

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handlers. As defined in the specification (see, e.g., paragraph 44 of the published application), data handlers process data provided in different forms/formats (e.g., history, alarms, graphics) by the extensible set of information sources. The Anuff '628 patent describes different "content" (see, e.g., col. 6, lines 22-26) and does not indicate that there are differences between the form/format of the data. Thus, the customization described in Anuff at column 6, lines 39-47 facilitates adding "content" rather than extending the types (i.e., the forms/format) of data handled by the portal server as recited in claim 5 and described in the specification.

Applicants traverse the rejection of independent claim 8 for at least the reasons set forth previously herein above with regard to claim 5. The disclosed/recited invention includes a framework wherein a set of data handlers are provided for processing information from a variety of sources that provide data in a variety of formats. As explained by Applicants in the specification (see, e.g., the written description of FIG. 2), the data handlers within the portal server perform data form/format-specific intermediate processing of the data received by the portal server from the process plant information sources before passing the data to requesting browser clients. Applicants respectfully submit that such functionality is neither disclosed nor suggested in the Anuff '628 patent that merely discloses a set of modules associated with various sources of content and makes no distinction between the types of data associated with the various sources of content. The Anuff '628 patent does not suggest any need for the claimed extensible set of data handlers nor a portal configuration utility that enables adding new data handlers for processing additional types of data. For at least these additional reasons, claim 8 is patentable over the prior art.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claim 9 as obvious over the prior art. Applicants note that the grounds for rejecting claim 9 in the Office Action do not even match up to the claim language. Applicants acknowledge that Anuff appears to disclose a user-configurable portal server data interface that allows a user to specify which ones, of a set of view components will be displayed on the user's display. However, nowhere does the Anuff reference mention/suggest that such configuration functionality extends to the ability to designate a new interface display element for presenting plant process information. Anuff allows a user to designate content displayed on a user interface, not the way it is rendered (i.e., the display element associated with that content).

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Applicants traverse the rejection of **claim 10**. Applicants agree with the Office Action's assertion that claim 10 is similar to claim 1. Claim 10 is patentable over the prior art for at least the reasons set forth above regarding claim 1.

Applicants traverse the rejection of **claim 11**. Claim 11 is similar to claim 1 in the sense that it specifies configuring/adding new plant information sources accessed via the portal server. Claim 11 is patentable over the prior art for at least the reasons set forth above regarding claim 1.

Applicants traverse the rejection of **claims 6 and 7** in section 5 of the Office Action. Claims 6 and 7 correspond to the exemplary configuration graphical user interfaces (e.g., FIGs. 4, 14 and 15). With regard to the rejection of claims 6 and 7, Applicants agree that Web forms were indeed known at the time of the invention. However, nowhere in the prior art is there a suggestion or teaching to provide a configuration user interface enabling users to add new plant information sources to the recited extensible set of plant information sources. Web forms do indeed simplify user-configuration. However, they represent an increased load upon the system designer. The Office Action does not point to any teaching in the prior art that the use of configuration templates (e.g., Web forms) is desirable in the context of configuring the set of inputs to a plant process information portal server. For at least these reasons there was no suggestion to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use the particular configuration interface modes recited in claims 6 and 7 to add the new plant information sources.

In addition to the previously pending claims 1-11, Applicants have submitted new claims addressing particular aspects of the disclosed embodiments. Applicants respectfully submit that the newly submitted claims recite inventions that are patentable over the prior art presently known to Applicants.

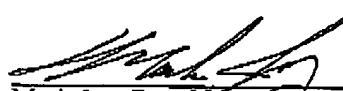
In summary, the present invention offers a flexible manufacturing/process control information provider architecture. This flexibility is achieved through a user-configurable manufacturing/process control information portal server that comprises multiple selectable data types (handlers) and data sources, accessed via the portal server, that provide data in various forms/format. The various forms/format are processed by particular data handlers from an extensible set of data handlers on the portal server.

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Conclusion

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: April 6, 2005

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